

From: Lisa Winstead, Associate Professor, Spanish Bilingual Authorization Coordinator, Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education, California State University, Fullerton

To: History Social Science Framework committee hssframework@cde.ca.gov

RE: Recommendation for amendments:

California history coincides with changes and movements throughout the nation and across borders. The current draft of History/Social Science Framework should be updated to include information from current research about the historical and global past which has shaped this state and particular laws and policies that have ensued. There are particular cases and instances of history that have not been included in the frameworks, such as the deportation of United States citizens of Mexican descent which has been addressed by Dr. Francisco Balderrama and Dr. Christine Valenciana. (Other colleagues have similarly sent letters highlighting specific details of cases that should be included.) There is primary document information regarding the deportation of individuals of Mexican descent and their children to Mexico and how this event which occurred across cities in the United States disrupted families in the 1930s. Furthermore, this issue can be linked to recent language issues and policies in California and other states (e.g., Arizona).

Teachers need to emphasize how the Spanish and later Mexicans (after the Independence of Spain in 1820) had already settled in California and were known as *Californios* and that the first constitution of California was bilingual. Thus, there was a time when both languages, Spanish and English, had equal status. However, once California became part of the United States, English became the dominant language. Thus, it is equally important to include issues of English-only movements (e.g., Proposition 227) to understand how the dominant language promote hierarchies of cultural and social status within society and the marginalization of particular groups who do not meet English-only language norms.

Movement is a theme that is covered in social studies which is often associated with physical movements such as migration, immigration, deportation. These types of movements which are particular to primarily the United States and Mexico historical context, such as the unconstitutional deportation of Mexican-Americans, need to be addressed on social and political levels. For instance, students need anchoring in understanding the reasons for “movement” of individuals across the borders and across the states.

Connections of movements such as the cases of many who migrated from the dustbowl states of the Midwest to California due to the potato famines as well as individuals who have crossed borders and oceans can be used as bases for comparison. Students also learn how borders which are invisible and only seen on paper do not separate family as well as economic ties and responsibilities. Congruently, teachers need to emphasize that movement is not entirely based on personal economic need but on the need of businesses that recruit individuals (e.g., immigrants) for labor through government. Thus, more emphasis needs to be provided about how the United States government promoted the immigration of Mexicans as part of the farm and industrial labor force through Bracero programs.

Correspondingly, when students study “movement” they can gain an understanding of multiple meanings and connotations of the term including its association with political movements intended to promote social change (e.g., Chicano Movement, Black Power Movement, Civil Rights Movements, Zapatista Movement).

Transnationalism is another concept that prompts the political, economic, and social understanding of migration movements. Again, the study of language arts can be pursued in terms of language families and associated terms such as transport, transit, etc. Furthermore, the concept of transnationalism provides a means for understanding the social, economic, and political ramifications and impact associated with trilateral treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Especially significant are how trilateral trade agreements can override policies and laws established in each of these countries. For instance, Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution which protected the rights of Indian landholders/farmers in Chiapas was not upheld once NAFTA passed causing the rise of the Zapatistas to defend their land claims.

Thus, history-social studies in California should be taught in way that helps students understand connections between themes and builds understanding of local, regional and global contexts. I believe that has been the intent of the California Social Studies Framework to promote conceptual and political understanding of similarly-related social events. However, in order to provide a more holistic and conceptual understanding of events and building of academic knowledge, teachers need to incorporate overarching themes as supported by specific events detailed by my colleagues in the field. I propose that you include these and their suggestions in the revised version of the History-Social Studies framework. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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